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CORONAVIRUS

Have More Athletes Died Suddenly Since Covid-19 Vaccines Arrived? Such Claims Lack Evidence

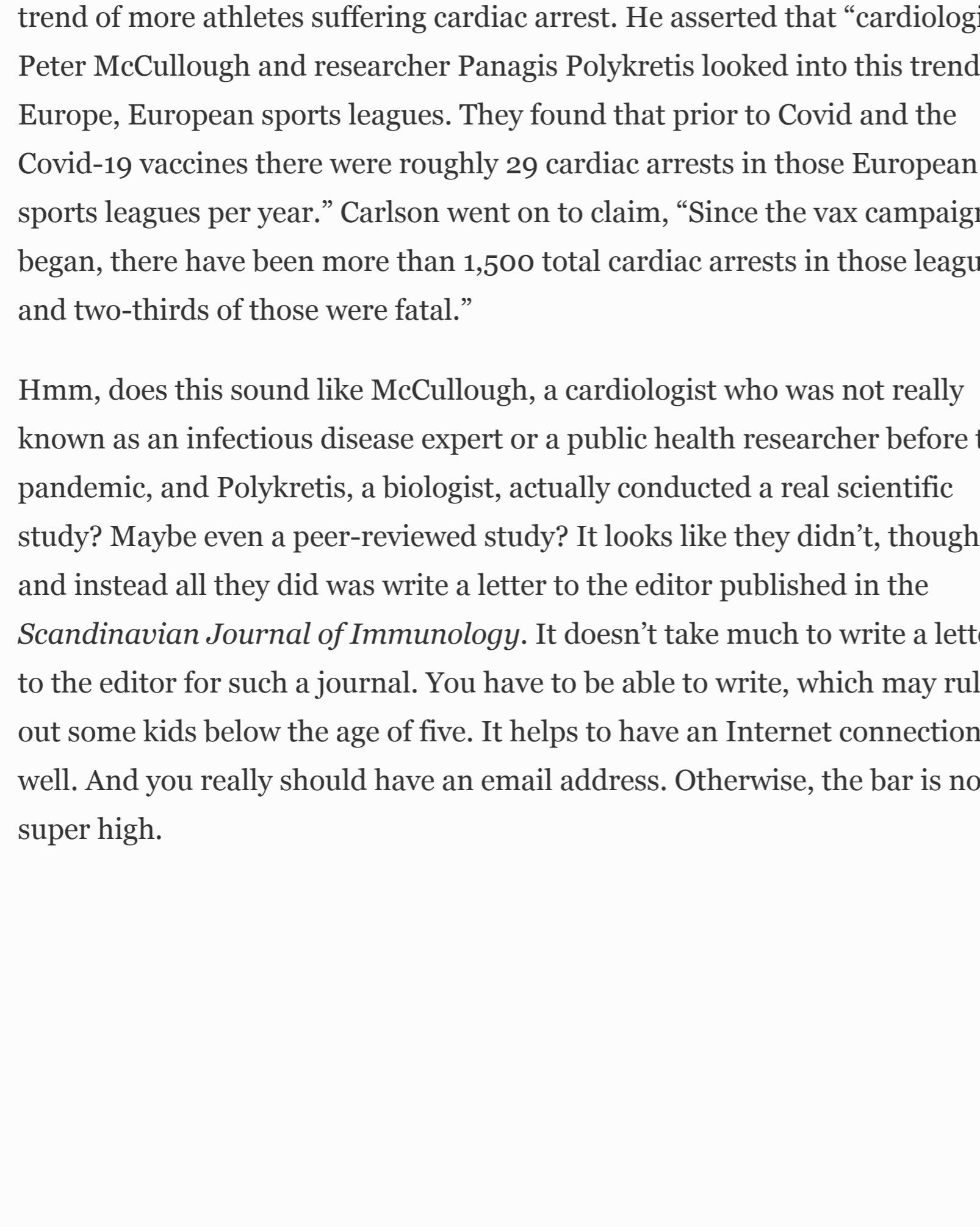
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I am a writer, journalist, professor, systems modeler, computational and digital health expert, avocado...

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If you are going to claim that more athletes have been suffering cardiac arrests and dying over the past two years, you had better sport some real numbers. Some real legitimate verifiable numbers. But that's not what Tucker Carlson did on his *FOX News* show "Tucker Carlson Tonight" when he made such a claim. Instead of real numbers, he mentioned a letter. One letter. One letter to the editor of a medical journal to be exact.

But Carlson didn't even specify that it was a letter in the episode of this show. The episode came after [Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin's had suffered a cardiac arrest](#). Carlson, who is not a professional athlete, not a professional medical doctor, and not a professional scientist, suggested that there's been a trend of more athletes suffering cardiac arrest. He asserted that "cardiologist Peter McCullough and researcher Panagis Polykretis looked into this trend in Europe, European sports leagues. They found that prior to Covid and the Covid-19 vaccines there were roughly 29 cardiac arrests in those European sports leagues per year." Carlson went on to claim, "Since the vax campaign began, there have been more than 1,500 total cardiac arrests in those leagues and two-thirds of those were fatal."

Hmm, does this sound like McCullough, a cardiologist who was not really known as an infectious disease expert or a public health researcher before the pandemic, and Polykretis, a biologist, actually conducted a real scientific study? Maybe even a peer-reviewed study? It looks like they didn't, though, and instead all they did was write a letter to the editor published in the *Scandinavian Journal of Immunology*. It doesn't take much to write a letter to the editor for such a journal. You have to be able to write, which may rule out some kids below the age of five. It helps to have an Internet connection as well. And you really should have an email address. Otherwise, the bar is not super high.

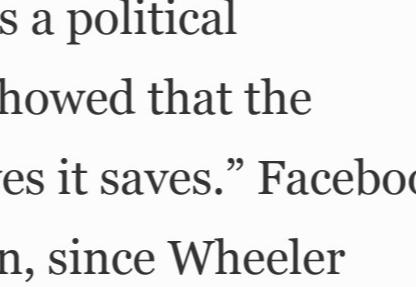
Let's take a closer look at that letter, which has basically only one line truly relevant to what Carlson had said. This line read, "From January 2021 to the time of writing, 1598 athletes suffered cardiac arrest, 1101 of which with deadly outcome." Where the heck did McCullough and Polykretis get those numbers? Well, in the letter they referenced a blog called [goodsciening.com](#). Yes, you heard that correctly: a blog.

As you can imagine, there are countless blogs out there ranging from [Ryan Gosling Disneyland Cats](#), which was "inspired by Ryan Gosling's belief that Disneyland is harboring an army of cats," to [Selleck Waterfall Sandwich](#), which exclusively focuses on Tom Selleck, waterfalls and sandwiches, because why not? Most of the blogs out there aren't reviewed for accuracy content. So you are pretty much relying on the reputations of the author or authors of blog.

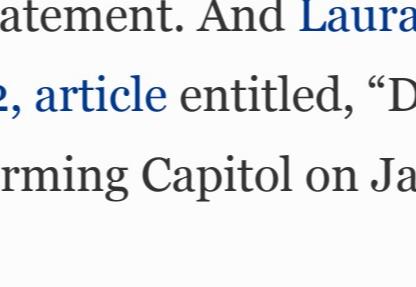
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So who are the authors of [goodsciening.com](#) blog? Drum roll, please. They don't tell you. It's anonymous. So for all you know, this site could be run by anti-vaxxers, hostile foreign agents, the army of cats in Disneyland, or anyone else.

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A closer look also reveals the very questionable ways that the site assembled a list that provides the 1598 and 1101 counts. The web page asserts that "the so-called health professionals running the COVID vaccine programs around the world keep repeating that 'the COVID vaccine is a normal vaccine and it is safe and effective.' In response to their pronouncement, here is a non-exhaustive and continuously growing list of mainly young athletes who had major medical issues in 2021/2022 after receiving one or more COVID vaccines."

But a closer look at the list reveals entries such as: "Cora O'Grady (51), Hill Walker was walking from Kilbehenny to the top of Galtymore in Limerick, Ireland. On the way, she suddenly became ill. Emergency services were unable to resuscitate her." Or "Sharen Manning (71), second-degree black belt Judoka and accomplished diver died at home in Ontario, Canada. Although the cause of death is not mentioned in the articles linked, they suggest donations to a cancer charity."

All of this begs the question, "What exactly is their definition of an athlete?" Are all of the people listed really current professional or collegiate athletes? Or are they just listing anyone who has died? And if they are trying to suggest that more people have died since late 2020 than in previous years, then why didn't they mention that little itty-bitty, teensy-weensy reason why this may have been the case? Namely, the Covid-19 pandemic, which has left over 1.22 million dead in the U.S. and over 6.72 million people dead across the world.

So, let's get this straight. Carlson made claims based on a Letter to the Editor that made claims based on an anonymous blog that made claims based on a list that hasn't even been really tracking what it has claimed that it's been tracking. That doesn't exactly seem like the Sounds of Science. And none of it seems like "Good Sciencing" at all.



Political commentator Liz Wheeler has amplified the letter from McCullough and Polykretis, despite ...

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Nevertheless, others like [Liz Wheeler](#) and [Simone Gold, MD](#), have shared and amplified the letter from McCullough and Polykretis. Who are Wheeler and Gold? Well, on July 2, 2021, Tom Kertscher covered for [Politifact](#) a Wheeler dealer Facebook post in which Wheeler, who is a political commentator, stated, "Peer reviewed, scientific study showed that the COVID-19 vaccine causes two deaths for every three lives it saves." Facebook subsequently flagged Wheeler's post for misinformation, since Wheeler didn't really provide any real evidence behind such a statement. And [Laura Romero](#) covered Gold for [ABC News](#) in a June 16, 2022, article entitled, "Dr. Simone Gold, leading anti-vax figure, sentenced for storming Capitol on Jan. 6." Yep, that headline is Gold, so to speak.

Interestingly, while the "Good Sciencing" website doesn't really identify the authors of its posts, it does mention the following: "Special thanks to the 'NOTB Sports - Sudden injuries and deaths' group on Telegram, the No More Silence website, Stew Peters, and all the individual investigators."

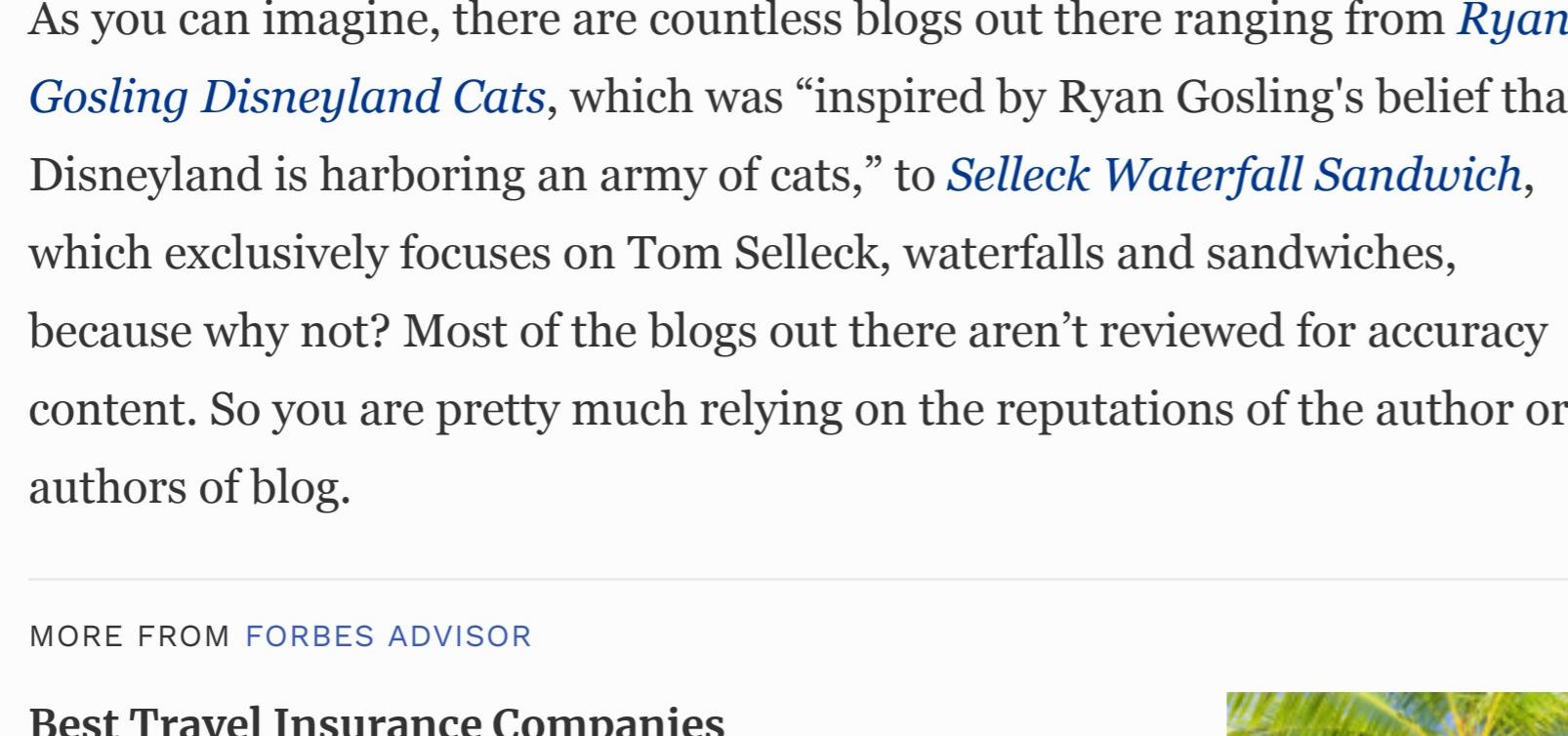
Peters, a former bounty hunter, was behind the film *Died Suddenly*, which I covered for *Forbes* in November 2022. This film claimed that lots of people have died suddenly after getting the Covid-19 vaccines but didn't really provide enough evidence to support its claims.

So, to recap, Carlson made claims based on a Letter to the Editor that made claims based on an anonymous blog that made claims based on a list that hasn't even been tracking what it's claims that it's been tracking and credited a guy who was behind a film entitled *Died Suddenly* that made claims without really supporting those claims. In the words of Keanu Reeves in *The Matrix*, whoa.

Again, that's not how good sciencing is supposed to go. The bottom line: don't follow everything that Carlson had said in his show to the letter. You'll realize that he wasn't actually sporting real, verifiable numbers to match all of his claims.

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